

Abstract of the Disclosure

5           A method and apparatus are disclosed for operating an eVOA by modulating its  
attenuation. If an optical signal power is below a loss of signal (LOS) power threshold the  
eVOA attenuation is set to a maximum attenuation and then, periodically and quickly  
decreased and increased in steps while checking for the presence of optical signals above the  
LOS power threshold. The method is also used for operating a multiplicity of eVOAs while  
10   minimizing the risk of damage to optical network equipment.